

14. (Amended once) The apparatus according to claim 13, further comprising a plurality of [lens] carriers, each of said containers being mounted on a respective one of said carriers.

Kindly add new claim 21 as follows:

--21. The apparatus of claim 7, wherein multiple said containers are sealed to said lidstock to form a set of packages.--

#### Remarks

The Office Action mailed December 9, 1999 was a restriction requirement which divided the claims into three Groups of inventions: claims 1-4; claims 5-14; claims 15-20. The Office Action states that Groups II and I, and Group II and III are distinct because they are combination/subcombination inventions. Groups I and III and distinct because they are subcombinations which are separately usable. The restriction requirement is traversed and reconsideration is respectfully requested for the reasons explained below.

The specification and the claims were reviewed and amendments are submitted above. The specification was amended to correct a typographical error. Claim 1 was amended to change the term "inspection lens carriers" to "carriers", and claim 14 was amended to change the term "lens carriers" to "carriers". The term "inspection" is incorrect. The absence of the term to describe the "carrier" is seen throughout the application. The terms "lens carrier" and "carrier" are used to describe the same item, the "carrier" throughout the application. Support for the term "carrier" can be found on page 7, line 8. Therefore, the amendment is fully supported and should be entered into the application.

Claims 3 and 4 were deleted without prejudice. Claim 5 was amended herein to make it depend from claim 1. Claim 13 was amended to make it clear that the lidstock can be held in the embodiments described within the application wherein there is a single mandrel, described in conjunction with Figs. 1 and 2 (page 8, lines 8-10), or more than one mandrel described in conjunction with Fig. 5 (page 13, lines 20-

22). Therefore, the amendment is fully supported and should be entered into the application.

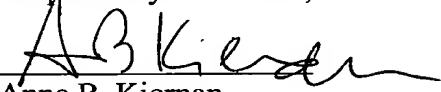
Claim 21 was added to further limit claim 7 wherein the lidstock seals multiple containers into a set of packages which is fully supported on page 8, line 16. Therefore, the amendment is fully supported and should be entered into the application.

Claim 5 has been amended to depend from claim 1; therefore claims 5-8, and 21 should be considered as part of Group I. Further, Applicants do not agree with the division of the claims into the three groups above. Group II should be claims 9-12, because those claims require multiple mandrels. Group III should be claims 13-14, because those claims require the lidstock being held until it is contacted with the one or more mandrels. Group IV should be claims 15-20, because those claims require a vision system.

Group I consisting of claims 1-2, 5-8 and 21 is elected with traverse. The restriction requirement is traversed, because all the claims are addressed to an apparatus for packaging contact lenses. Group I-III address ways to provide more independence in the sealing mechanism to result in better sealing of the packages. Group IV addresses a vision system to align the lidstock. For the conservation of the resources of the USPTO, the claims are related, such that the prior art searches of all the Groups would overlap. It is therefore, respectfully requested that all the claims be considered together in a single application. In the alternative, if the Examiner disagrees with Applicants, perhaps the claims of multiple Groups could be considered in a single application.

For the reasons above, it is believed that claims 1-24 are properly in condition for allowance. Allowance of the claims is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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